

IC PURCHASE CARD COORDINATOR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday August 17, 2005

ATTENDEES:

NIH Purchase Card Program Office

John Best
Nancy Davis
Teresa Arnold

IC Coordinators & Representatives

Edith Smith - CIT
Robin Klevins - NCCAM
Kathleen Hargett - NCI
Donna Brooks- NCMHD
Leah Stroud - NCRR
Mike Philippi - NHGRI
Jim Mitchell - NHLBI
Alene Robinson - NEI
Anthony Pirrone- NIA
Priscilla Logan - NIAAA
Shamay Knox - NIAID
Olga A- Polston - NIAID
Inez Demery - NICHD
Erin Hall - NIDA
Bridget McDonald - NIDA
Anne Sumner – NIDCD
Patricia Barton- NIDDK(Extramural)
Cheryl Leone – NIMH
Monica E. Scott - NIMH
Elizabeth Elliott - NINDS
Candice Scott for A. *Ferreira* –NINR
Karen Riggs - NLM
Tina Tyler- ORF

Agenda items as discussed were as follows:

Purchase Card Procedures for End of FY 2005

The main purpose of the meeting was to distribute the end of Fiscal Year Procedures, provide updates of the new business system, purchasing training and other items. The Purchase Card procedures were distributed but were not discussed as the IC Purchase Card coordinators agreed collectively this was not necessary. The procedures are the same as the previous year. The only changes were the dates. There was some additional instruction for Intra Mall users regarding CAN Summary Reports and preobligations. Mr. John Slovikosky, of the Office of Financial Management (OFM) and Anthony Sambataro of Center for Information Technology (CIT) were not able to attend the meeting but provided contact information in section (H) of the purchase card procedures for end of FY 2005. The coordinators requested that an electronic copy of the procedures for end of year 2005 be sent to them and they would distribute the procedures throughout their respective institutes. The procedures will be probably be used again in fiscal year 2006 pending rollout of the business system in January 2007.

Purchase Card Online Refresher Training

The PC online refresher training course is required of all purchase card holders (CH) and Card Approving Officials (CAO)'s. IC purchase card coordinators were informed that a considerable number of CH/CAO's have not taken the training. This topic was discussed at the last IC Purchase Card Coordinators meeting held in March. The NIH Purchase Card office urged IC Purchase Card coordinators to remind their respective CH/CAO to take the required training and keep track of their compliance. Coordinators would be notified in the upcoming months with a list of people who have not participated in that online training course.

Mandatory Green Purchasing Training

Green purchasing training is mandatory for all CH/CAO's. The deadline date for this training is **December 31, 2005**. Coordinators were informed that CH/CAO whom have not taken this training face possible suspension or cancellation of their account. (**This statement was upgraded from possible to definite suspension of card privileges and or warrant authority**) New CH/CAO accounts in 2006 will have to have this training prior to opening that account. Archives online provide a version of Green Purchasing training that may be taken. Viewing this training would satisfy the requirement also. CH/CAO's should notify John Best after completion of the course and Carl Henn would receive certification from 1102's, 1105's and other procurement personnel. The email notifying Carl or John of the course completion should come from the immediate supervisor, CAO, IC coordinator or card holder's carbon copy to any of the aforementioned personnel. Emails listing a group of participants would be allowed also. An Excel spreadsheet, from the Department of Health Human Services DHHS, is sent to Carl Henn and John Best of all DHHS employees whom have participated in the training.

Carl Henn and John Best also maintain a separate list of NIH participants. The lists are shared to prevent duplication of names and reminder notification should be sent out in the near future to CH/CAO's whom have not taken the course. The required Green Purchasing training is available online for free at www.golearn.gov <<http://www.golearn.gov>> (the Gov Online Learning Center), where it is titled "What is Green Purchasing, anyway?" The class takes around 2 or 3 hours. You don't have to complete all of it at one sitting. To take the class, you must first register with Gov Online - see the 'Registration' button in the upper right hand corner of the website. When you've completed the course, the system provides a certificate. The web cast version may be viewed at: <http://oamp.od.nih.gov/Division/acp/GreenPurchasing/GreenPurchasingVideoTraining.asp>

Tentative Contract Award Date for the New PC Reviewers

A request for quotes has been issued to handle various aspects of the purchase card program. Among other things the contract will provide new reviewers in our section as well as augment the current purchase card training. The new reviewers will be contractors and would perform purchase card reviews in the same manner as before with some subtle changes. The contractors would report to the NIH Purchase Card Program and be trained by senior reviewers. The Purchase Card Program anticipates award of the contract in October 2005 with contractors beginning the review process in January 2006. To clarify an ongoing misunderstanding, the NIH purchase card training course number 2636, taught at 6120 Executive Plaza South is the only course currently recognized and accepted by the NIH purchase card office as the appropriate class for new purchase card applicants to take. The DHHS purchase card class is not recognized by the NIH PC program as an acceptable course for the government VISA card.

Credit Worthiness

Credit Worthiness, is coming, no one knows exactly when and how will it be administered. The PC program is still waiting for guidance from DHHS. There is no clear cut guidance on what is considered a new account. Switching from agency to agency may or may not be considered a new account. Termination from the federal government and then start up again would definitely be considered new and thereby constitute a credit check. Implementation was to begin October 1, 2005 however nothing has been established yet. Information will be disseminated as it becomes more defined. Contractors would not be allowed to possess a US government IMPAC card. Only NIH employees may possess a credit card. There are similar situations where a contractor may possess a card such as SAIC in the National Cancer Institute, but SAIC has their own separate account with US Bank, with different numbers, different level fours and are not tied to the NIH PC program system.

Discussion of the New Business System Update

The latest information for the purchase card rollout will be January of 2007. Currently this is a firm date.

Discussion of Bank Update/Ongoing System Clean Up Project

U.S. Bank or Merchant Bank will be rolling out a new platform. The bank will create all brand new card accounts with the card account numbers. They will transfer over the information from the old account to the new account. The ADB will do the same thing and each card holder will receive a new card account with a new number. The process should be seamless. This is one of the reasons for the new application form where we ask for the card holder's and CAO's information. This is part of the cleanup process. In the past there were some errant information, especially our CAO accounts that had bad addresses, and phone numbers. The PC program is aware that people move around and most of the times the program receives the information that they have changed, but many times we don't and we find out down the road. This is just one step in cleaning up all three systems. This should also ensure that when the bank roll down, then the system rolls out, our system will be inline also. All of the system roll outs should occur about the same time. Institutes should expect to see many things come out of our office, in an attempt to make sure all accounts match in all three systems. Accounts created before April 1 of 2005, will be targeted to make sure that CH/CAO information is correct.

New PC Staff

The PC program has enlisted contractor assistance with the system clean up project. The new PC staff members assisting John Best, Theresa Arnold and Nancy Davis are Nieshia Blocker, Diane Johnson, and Sharonn Starks. Emails or phone calls and help line assistance from these people are legitimate as they are working in our office. The bank transition will take effect in January 2006. The fee for the new bank will remain the same as stipulated in the contract.

Various Topics of Discussion

Ms. Teresa Arnold will send out suspensions in October for August, September and possibly October due to a one week absence in August and the end of the fiscal year in September. Cardholder's should make every effort to reconcile their accounts on time. Ms. Nancy Davis wished to share some information with the group regarding reporting of cardholders purchases. Coordinators interested in reports detailing each item purchased by their cardholders may request access to this information by emailing Nancy Davis.

Requestors of this detailed report should be careful with the sensitive data and should also be aware that the report is printed by Institutes or Centers. Intramural and extramural data may not be differentiated from one another.

A question was posed to the PC program representatives regarding suspensions for cardholders whom deliberately purchase unauthorized items. Suspensions of this nature are generally requested from the IC purchase card coordinator or cardholders 'supervisor. Internal reviews conducted by institutes and centers may turn up illegal activity. This documentation should be forwarded to the Purchase Card program office, attention Ms. Nancy Davis. The issue of more CAO accountability was discussed. Currently the Purchase Card program has no written policy formulated on CAO accountability. This will be revisited in the near future.

A concern was put forth regarding contractors taking the NIH purchase card course. The issue of determining which registrants were contractors versus government employees was presented also. The concern was addressed by stating that the NIH Training Office has no way to track who is registering for purchase card training class.

Ms. Teresa Arnold reminded coordinators to pay closer attention to findings letters received after a spot check has been performed. A variety of unusual items appear on a list generated from CIT and must be examined by the purchase card office. The minutes from the March 2, 2005 IC Purchase Card Coordinators meeting will be available on the OLAO website: <http://www.olao.od.nih.gov>.

The meeting was adjourned.